

**Summary of the Environmental
Laboratory Advisory Board Meeting**

November 19, 2003

1:00 P.M.

Lara Autry opened the meeting. She welcomed everyone to the meeting as well as any guests that may be attending. The meeting was turned over to the chair, Zonetta English. Ms. English asked each board member present to identify themselves for the record.

Members present:

Elaine Lemoine
Peter Spath
Michael Herdlick
Paul Banfer
Jim Bentley
Rock Vitale
Zonetta English
Gary Decant
Nan Thomey
Mark Marcus
Bob Wyeth
James Jordan
Mike Green
Lara Autry
Rachael Trimpet

Members absent:

John Bigmeat

1. Review of the minutes from the October 17, 2003 meeting

Revision 3 of the minutes will be updated with Ms. Autry's latest changes. No other changes were made. Minutes were approved as Revision 4 and will be sent out to all members. Any additional changes to the minutes should be sent back by end of week to Ms. English.

2. Update on NELAP/NELAC

NELAP/NELAC

Ms. Autry updated the board members on the current situation with the Accrediting Authorities. Currently re-accreditation of 10 Authorities is being sought. All applications from the Accrediting Authorities are due this week. One

Accrediting Authority did not make the application deadline. Ms. Autry has sent a letter to them stating there is a 20 day deadline to submit their application. Ms. Autry has already received one application and has scheduled the onsite review.

NELAC 9i

Ms. Autry updated the board members on Nelac9i. The brochures for the meeting will be mailed out next week. It will also be posted on the INELA and NELAC websites. This is the first of two ELAB face to face meetings. Ms. Autry asked the board members to consider the second meeting to correspond to something other than NELAC. She stated ELAB could reach a broader audience this way.

A2LA

Ms. Autry updated the board members on her meeting with the A2LA Board of Directors. The meeting went well and she discussed the history and timeline of the issue. She has received a letter from Peter Unger with a proposal on how to put together the new program.

Proficiency Testing Meeting

Ms. Autry apologized to Paul Banfer for not putting his name on the list to be accepted into the meeting. She has sent out a summary of the meeting to all those who attended. She has received positive feedback from the meeting. She added the point of the meeting was to put the things on the table that are needed to make NELAC successful, and she believes this occurred. Ms. Autry will send the notes to all board members next week. Ms. Autry encourage board members to participate in helping with items addressed at meeting.

ELAB Charter

Ms. Autry informed the board members that ELAB received recognition at the ACIL meeting that they could serve another role within the agency. She added, it is hard to start a new FACA within the agency, it could take years. But, it is not hard to find an existing FACA and modify their charter to have a broader scope. This is a good opportunity for ELAB. The new charter will provide feedback for the Forum for Environmental Measurements. ELAB would be responsible for giving feedback to the EPA administrator, Agency Science Advisor, and/or the Forum for Environmental Measurements. Ms. Autry will send two letters to the board given out at Forum for Environmental Measurements meeting this past Monday. She read an excerpt from the letters, which states the expansion ELAB would take part in. She noted letter A is new, letter B is what the current charter states. She restated the board members might want to hold one of the face to face meetings in a setting to reach the new community. She suggested the

National Environmental Monitor Conference held in the summer. In 2004 this will be held in Washington DC.

Dr. Marcus asked Ms. Autry if the expanded charter has any additional budget money? Ms. Autry stated she would have the support available for the minutes. So that issue is resolved. Dr. Marcus raised the issue, that it would seem better if ELAB addresses issues brought to them by EPA. Ms. Autry stated the old charter was focused on NELAC, and EPA was not good at providing issues that they wanted advice on. She confirmed the new charter would get more requests for advice from the EPA.

Lara added when the executive secretary is named, she will stay as the DFO of ELAB.

Ms. English commented she is still concerned that the tools must be in place. She asked if there would be any financial support and a process of better communication to get information? Also, if there is a way to get a face to face meeting with Dr. Gelman? Ms. Autry stated she could not answer the funding question, yet. There is a potential to get more funding but will know more about this issue soon. Ms. Autry stated she would be happy to set up a meeting with Dr. Gelman.

Dr. Marcus commented that Dr. Gelman has always been available and receptive. Ms. Autry commented he would welcome meeting one or two times per year.

3. Action Items from October 15th Meeting

Non Participating Lab/Draft Language

Mr. Wyeth has completed a draft letter compiling all comments from Dr. Marcus and Mr. Bentley but it did not get distributed due to computer problems. He will re-send the letter. Mr. Decant stated he still struggles with the fact he believes this is two issues and the board is trying to make it one issue. Mr. Wyeth stated all of his issues were included in the letter and it gives about 10 recommendations. Mr. Bentley commented he believes the board is on the right track, but it could be approached from different angles. Further discussion continued, the letter will be sent first to Mr. Bentley and Dr. Marcus, then to the board for comments and final approval.

Mr. Bentley asked the chair if he could also be part of the non participating lab/draft language and possibly have Rock Vitale on the Homeland Security Issues. The chair commented it would not be a problem for him to do this. Ms. English recapped that the board needs to make recommendations to the EPA, to write some language about the importance of this issue. She added this needs to be brought to the for front for the EPA to consider. Once the letter is approved

by the board members then it can be broken down into work groups, but first the recommendations need to be made to the EPA.

Ms. Thomey is the president of a participating laboratory and would like to also help out with this issue. Mr. Vitale also stated he would be happy to work as well.

Action Item for December 17th meeting

Initial board members must review the draft letter and have it distributed to the board by Monday November 24th. All members should review final recommendation letter by December 17th. The letter will be voted on and approved at next meeting and mailed by December 19th.

Homeland Security

Dr. Green read his recommendation to the board members. It stated to have NELAP form a team to establish guidelines for labs that hold certain materials that could be used for weapons of mass destruction. Dr. Green will forward his language to the entire board. This issue will try to be added to the other recommendations to be sent.

New Business

Ms. Trimpet is interested in how ELAB feels about the EPA being an Accrediting Authority. Ms. English stated that within the last two years ELAB has not been sent any letters regarding this issue. It was originally included in what is currently being drafted to send out. Ms. English will send an e-mail with all ELAB recommendations to the EPA administrator to the board members before the administrative meeting.

No other business.

Administrative meeting

Ms. English will send out information concerning the call in number and agenda. She added the Administrative Meeting is a meeting to discuss how we would like the board to function.

Ms. English thanked everyone for their participation and turned the meeting back over to Ms. Autry.

Ms Autry thanked everyone for their participation and reminded them the next meeting would be held December 17, 2003.

Ms. Autry adjourned the meeting at 2:40pm.

